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FOUR TREES OF EARLY SUMMER INTEREST

Tatarian Maple, *Acer tataricum* (L.)

The gay bright scarlet seed wings (samaras) so conspicuous along sections of Forest Road during the last half of June are those of the Tatarian Maple, bushy, well shaped small tree (to 25 ft.) known to have been in cultivation for two hundred years.

Perfectly hardy north in spite of its Southeastern European and Asia Minor origin, it is one of those useful low growing maples not only ideally proportioned for small scale developments but of considerable ornamental interest as well.

Unlike the related Amur Maple ("*ginnala*"), whose foliage is distinguished by an attenuated central lobe, the leaves of "*tataricum*" are mostly unlobed, broad ovate in shape with doubly and irregularly toothed margins and heart shaped bases. They are 2 to 3½ inches long and 1½ to 2½ in width, thin textured and smooth. Their summer coloring is a lively bright green, accentuated by the red petioles supporting them. The autumn color change is less striking, however, being clear yellow with an occasional suffusion of orange red.

The tiny greenish white flowers in long peduncled panicles are not prominent, but what they lack in interest is more than compensated for by the showy seed wings three quarters to an inch long and a quarter or more in width. That they are borne almost parallel to each other should be noted as the position of the samaras is an important identifying feature of the maples. The period of effectiveness of the seed wings lasts for several weeks.

While the Tatarian Maple supposedly prefers a moist soil, Arboretum plantings have shown the tree to be quite tolerant.

Largeleaf Dogwood, *Cornus macrophylla* (Wall) (syn. *brachypoda*)

One of the tallest of the arborescent dogwoods to be successfully established at the Morton Arboretum is this large leaved species from the

Himalayas, China and Japan where it grows into a 30 to 50 ft. tree. As its appearance suggests, it is a close relative of the Giant Dogwood, *C. controversa*, from which it differs principally in its larger size and in the fact that its leaves are arranged oppositely in pairs.

Unlike the spring blooming types with their large showy floral bracts, the Largeleaf Dogwood has the diminutive inflorescences typical of the shrubby species, narrow, four petaled flowers not over three eighths of an inch across produced in crowded, somewhat rounded cymes held well above the foliage. They open in late June, and being generously distributed, give the entire plant a creamy white appearance. Globular bluish black fruit succeeds them in October.

The common name refers to the oversized leaves earmarking the species. They may vary from 4 to 7 inches long and as much as $3\frac{1}{2}$ wide, but regardless of size their shape is uniformly ovate to roundish or oblong with extremely long pointed tips. Attractively poised on the branches in a semi-drooping position and of good color (rich green), they are a decided asset to the tree.

The Arboretum representative of *Cornus macrophylla* is a 25 foot multiple trunked specimen just off the terrace to the left of the Rotunda axis. In this sheltered, partially shaded location it has successfully weathered innumerable climatic extremes since being set out in 1938.

Goldenrain Tree, *Koelreuteria paniculata* (Laxm.)

"Raintree County," the historical novel by Ross Lockridge and the motion picture of the same name adapted from it introduced to the public a new tree, the "Raintree," one previously known to relatively few.

An abbreviation of the accepted common name, "Goldenrain," Raintree is botanically *Koelreuteria paniculata*, arborescent member of the Soapberry (*Sapindaceae*) Family indigenous to China, Korea and Japan, known variously as Pride of India, Varnish Tree, Gate Tree and China Tree.

Not a tall tree as the movie pictured it, but rather a low grower in the 30 ft. height category, it reaches its ornamental climax in July when large, terminal panicles (to 15 in.) of small, four petaled flowers marked at the base with an orange maroon band cap the tree with gold. As they age the blossoms are shed in a golden-rain.

The Goldenrain's introduction to the Midwest in the 1820's is an interesting saga centered in New Harmony, Indiana, small community on the bank of the lower Wabash River where the Rappites, an ascetic religious group from Germany attempted in 1815, under the leadership of George Rapp, to build a perfect communal society. Later Robert Owen, Scotch philanthropist, industrialist and social reformer took over the community for his experiment in Utopian living, gathering around him more scientists and scholars than were to be found any place else in the United States at the time with the possible exception of Philadelphia. One of the group, William Maclure, scientist and world traveller introduced

the Goldenrain Tree to New Harmony. Having seen and admired it on one of his world tours he sent seed back to his friend Thomas Say, who planted it near the gate of the Owen-Maclure home. It thrived in its new Indiana location and over the years has been extensively planted in New Harmony. There it has always been known as the Gate Tree and each year during blossom season a festival is held in its honor.

In full sunlight the Goldenrain develops into a symmetrical round-topped small tree, artistically branched and furnished with lacey compound or doubly compound, incisely toothed foliage somewhat resembling Sumac. Attractive from the time it first unfolds its red-gold fern-like fronds through autumn when yellow and bronze supplants its summer green, it has a long season of effectiveness.

Seeing the *Koelreuterias* golden clouds against a blue summer sky cannot fail to create a lasting impression, for no other tree puts forth such a floral show at that time. A word must be said in favor of the fruit, too, three sided inflated green pods the size of walnuts and shaped like Japanese lanterns. Enclosed within them are pea sized seeds which darken to almost black as the pods change to tan and eventually brown.

Known for its tolerance of heat and drouth, and hardy north in soils that are light and well drained, the Goldenrain is an adaptable tree combining beauty with a storied background.

Silver Linden, *Tilia tomentosa* (Moench.)

One of summer's sweetest fragrances is that of Linden blossoms, no exception being those of the Silver Linden or White Lime, handsome tree introduced from Southeastern Europe and Asia Minor during colonial days.

Stately, is scarcely adequate to describe the beauty of this upright branched, broad pyramidal tree whose tailored trimness and luxuriant foliage is unexcelled by other Lindens. Known to reach a height of 80 or 90 feet in favored locations, the Silver Linden needs space for development as crowding prevents the proper display of its most desirable features.

Densely arranged overlapping foliage attests to the species' efficiency as a shade tree although a comparatively slow growth rate might discourage those wishing immediate effects. With their white wooly undersides and dark polished upper surfaces the thick leathery textured leaves are especially good looking. On a still day their effect is that of deepest green, but in the slightest breeze a whiteness almost as prominent as that of Silver Poplar is revealed. The 3 to 5 inch leaves are almost circular in outline with abrupt tips and heart shaped or uneven bases. They are supported by petioles shorter than half the size of the leaf blade. Both petioles and young branchlets show a pronounced tomentum.

What the small yellowish flowers lack in size and showiness they make up for in fragrance, adding this pleasant feature to the scents of early summer. They occur 7 to 10 together in pendulous cymes. Minutely

warty, slightly five angled or egg shaped seeds attached to leafy bracts succeed them, to be dispersed later by autumn winds.

Of the Silver Lindens growing in the Arboretum the best specimens will be found in the following locations: north of the Arboretum Center Building, in the meadow northwest of the director's residence and along the Main Entrance Drive to the Thornhill Building.

E. L. Kammerer



The Largeleaf Dogwood, *Cornus macrophylla* (Wall), arborescent species blooming in late June or early July

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